

Opening Hymn: Come thou long expected Jesus

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver;
born a child and yet a king;
born to reign in us for ever;
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit,
rule in all our hearts alone:
by thy all-sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Cross of Jesus 3ii NEH

The Advent Wreath: Advent 4 – The Blessed Virgin Mary

People of God: prepare! God, above all, maker of all, is one with us in Christ.
God, the mighty God, bends down in love to earth.
God with us, God beside us, comes soon to the world he has made.

Let us pray:

God our Father,
the angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary that she was to be the mother of your Son.
Though Mary was afraid, she responded to your call with joy.
Help us, whom you call to serve you,
to share like her in your great work of bringing to our world your love and healing.
We ask this through him who is the light coming into the world,
the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Collect

God our redeemer,
who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary
to be the mother of your Son:
grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour,
so we may be ready to greet him
when he comes again as our judge;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The New Testament Reading

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

To God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever! Amen.

This is the word of the Lord.

Romans 16: 25–27

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation: Wait for the Lord

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Taize Community

The Gospel

Alleluia. Alleluia.

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia.

cf Isaiah 40: 3–5

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

St Luke 1: 26–38

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Creed:

Let us declare our faith in the living God.

We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Offertory Hymn: O come, O come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel!
redeem thy captive Israel,
that into exile drear is gone
far from the face of God's dear Son.
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.*

O come, thou Wisdom from on high!
who madest all in earth and sky,
creating man from dust and clay:
to us reveal salvation's way. *Rejoice!...*

O come, O come, Adonaï,
who in thy glorious majesty
from Sinai's mountain, clothed with awe,
gavest thy folk the ancient law. *Rejoice!...*

O come, thou Root of Jesse! draw
the quarry from the lion's claw;
from those dread caverns of the grave,
from nether hell, thy people save. *Rejoice!...*

O come, thou Lord of David's Key!
the royal door fling wide and free;
safeguard for us the heavenward road,
and bar the way to death's abode. *Rejoice!...*

O come, O come, thou Dayspring bright!
pour on our souls thy healing light;
dispel the long night's lingering gloom,
and pierce the shadows of the tomb. *Rejoice!...*

O come, Desire of nations! show
thy kingly reign on earth below;
thou Corner-stone, uniting all,
restore the ruin of our fall. *Rejoice!...*

Veni Emmanuel 11 NEH

The Anthem: Gabriel's Message

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
'All hail', said he, 'thou lowly maiden Mary,
most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!

'For known a blessed Mother thou shalt be,
all generations laud and honour thee,
thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold.
Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
'To me be as it pleaseth God', she said,
'My soul shall laud and magnify his Holy Name.'
Most highly favoured lady. Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:
'Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!

Arr. John Rutter (b. 1945)

Communion Hymn: For Mary mother of our Lord

For Mary, Mother of our Lord,
God's holy name be praised,
who first the Son of God adored,
as on her child she gazed.

The angel Gabriel brought the word
she should Christ's mother be;
Our Lady, handmaid of the Lord,
made answer willingly.

The heavenly call she thus obeyed,
and so God's will was done;
the second Eve love's answer made
which our redemption won.

She gave her body for God's shrine,
her heart to piercing pain;
and knew the cost of love divine,
when Jesus Christ was slain.

Dear Mary, from your lowliness
and home in Galilee
there comes a joy and holiness
to every family.

Hail, Mary, you are full of grace,
above all women blest;
blest in your Son, whom your embrace
in birth and death confessed.

Kilmarnock 161 NEH

Final Hymn: Lo! He comes with clouds descending

Lo! he comes with clouds descending,
once for favoured sinners slain;
thousand thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train:

Alleluia!
God appears, on earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold him
robed in dreadful majesty;
those who set at nought and sold him,
pierced and nailed him to the Tree,
deeply wailing,
shall the true Messiah see.

Those dear tokens of his passion
still his dazzling body bears,
cause of endless exultation
to his ransomed worshippers:
with what rapture
gaze we on those glorious scars!

Yea, Amen! let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory,
claim the kingdom for thine own:
O come quickly!
Alleluia! Come, Lord, come!

Helmsley 9 NEH